

Appendix 7

Observation Protocol and Ground Rules

These rules were created to ensure the safety of both the humans and the animals at the gather site(s).

A scheduled public observation day provides a more structured mechanism for interested members of the public to see the wild horse gather activities at a given site. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) attempts to allow the public to get an overall sense of the gather process and has available staff who can answer questions that the public may have. The public rendezvous at a designated place and are escorted by BLM representatives to and from the gather site.

- The BLM will schedule observation days to provide the media and public opportunities to view activities during the wild horse gather.
- To provide a safe environment for the animals, BLM staff, contractors and members of the public/media, requests will be accepted on a first come, first served basis and be limited to **10 people** per observation day unless otherwise approved by the authorized BLM official overseeing the gather. The BLM recommends all appointments be made as far in advance as possible in order to help us schedule and confirm your request and will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the public.
- Observation days and gather operations may be suspended if bad weather conditions create unsafe flying conditions.
- The BLM will notify observers as soon as possible if an observation day is canceled due to bad weather.
- Observers must provide their own 4-wheel drive high clearance vehicle and appropriate shoes, clothing, and food.
- Observers are prohibited from riding in government and contractor vehicles and equipment.
- Visitors arriving at the rendezvous site without an appointment will not be allowed to participate in the observation day.
- BLM representatives will escort visitors to and from the gather and/or temporary holding facility.
- Visitors will be assigned to a BLM representative and must stay with that person at all times.
- Visitors are **NOT** permitted to walk around the gather site unaccompanied by a BLM representative.
- The BLM will clearly identify observation areas and visitors **must** stay within these designated areas.
- Observers are prohibited from climbing/trespassing onto or in the trucks, equipment, or corrals, which is the private property of the contractor.
- Visitors must direct their questions/comments to either a designated BLM representative or the BLM spokesperson on site, and not engage other BLM/contractor staff and disrupt their gather duties/responsibilities.
- BLM may make the BLM/contractor staff available during down times for a Q&A session.
- When given the signal that the helicopter is close to the gather site bringing horses in, visitors must sit down in areas specified by BLM representatives and must not move or talk as the horses are guided into the corral.

Observers will be polite, professional, and respectful to BLM managers and staff and the contractor/employees.

Visitors who do not cooperate and follow the rules will be escorted off the gather site by BLM law enforcement personnel and will be prohibited in participating in any subsequent observation days.

Non-Scheduled Observation Day Protocol and Ground Rules

Non-scheduled observation days are days when the public is welcome to attend a gather on public land, or on specified private lands where permission has been granted. The public is responsible for their own safety and health in their travels to and from the gather site.

- BLM staff may be limited on these days to answer questions.
- Visitors must direct their questions/comments to either a designated BLM representative or the BLM spokesperson on site, and not engage other BLM/contractor staff and disrupt their gather duties/responsibilities.
- The public will be expected to remain in designated observation areas.
- Visitors are **NOT** permitted to walk around the gather site unaccompanied by a BLM representative.
- The BLM will clearly identify observation areas and visitors **must** stay within these designated areas.
- Observers are prohibited from climbing/trespassing onto or in the trucks, equipment or corrals, which is the private property of the contractor.
- Observers must provide their own 4-wheel drive high clearance vehicle and appropriate shoes, clothing, and food.
- When given the signal that the helicopter is close to the gather site bringing horses in, visitors must sit down in areas specified by BLM representatives and must not move or talk as the horses are guided into the corral.
- Gather operations may be suspended if bad weather conditions create unsafe flying conditions. Notification of suspension of gather operations will be made to the public that is present as soon as possible.
- Visitors must direct their questions/comments to either a designated BLM representative or the BLM spokesperson on site, and not engage other BLM/contractor staff and disrupt their gather duties/responsibilities.
- BLM may make the BLM/contractor staff available during down times for a Q&A session.

Observers will be polite, professional, and respectful to BLM managers and staff and the contractor/employees.

Visitors who do not cooperate and follow the rules will be escorted off the gather site by BLM law enforcement personnel and will be prohibited in participating in any subsequent observation days.